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Sapir Trying To Avoid Open Hearing--Kohn

Metropolitan Crime Commission Managing Director Aaron Kohn has charged that City Councilman Eddie L. Sapir is trying to use the grand jury to avoid a public hearing on Kohn's claim that Sapir is in "continuous" contact with rackets figure Carlos Marcello.

Kohn's comments came yesterday after Sapir got an agreement from Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison that he would take the matter to the Orleans Parish Grand Jury.

Kohn and the Crime Commission have asked for a formal City Council hearing on the charges of Sapir's connections with Marcello.

SAPIR HAS ASKED the DA's office to have the grand jury consider placing intimidation-of-a-public-official charges against Kohn.

"I am confident that after the grand jury hears Mr. Kohn and myself that Mr. Kohn will once again be proven a professional liar," Sapir aid.

Asked what possible charge might be involved, Sapir replied: "It amounts to public intimidation."

Kohn said grand jury sessions are secret and "answering that question before the grand jury is not going to tell the public. We think the proper place to answer the question is before the public and not in the privacy of the grand jury."

THE VERBAL SLUGFEST between Kohn and Sapir was ignited Thursday during a City Council hearing on an ordinance to legalize charity bingo.

Kohn said the Crime Commission, which opposes the move, is primarily concerned with how Sapir's relationship with those people who financially benefited from illegal operation of bingo in the past will affect his current actions on the ordinance.

Kohn said he had told the council that in the event of a hearing he could suggest the names of persons for the council to call. He said he saw no reasons for calling these same persons before the grand jury, because the MCC is not accusing Sapir of any crime, and therefore has no case to present.